Detail of the fresco by Gerolamo Muziano in the Audience Hall (1565-67) with a view of the villa and the gardens as they were originally designed.

As the Franciscans used only a tiny part of the building, the remainder had been turned into the official residence of the Governor-Cardinals. We learn from a letter sent by Ippolito to his brother, Ercole II, Duke of Ferrara, that after just a bit more than a month at Tivoli (from September 9 to October 28, 1550), Ippolito had regained his health, undermined by the stress of the conclave he had just attended, to such a degree that he had made up his mind to turn the monastery into a real villa. This may be considered the birth of the Villa d'Este.